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DEMOGRAPHIC AND SOCIAL STATISTICS

Demographic, social and migration statistics

Report of the Secretary-General

SUMMARY

The present report contains information on the activities completed by the United Nations Secretariat on the demographic and social statistics programme during 1993-1994. It covers the subjects of civil registration and vital statistics (paras. 2-12); international migration statistics (paras. 13-16); the Demographic Yearbook and its database (paras. 17-22); family and household statistics (paras. 23-24); human settlement statistics (paras. 25-27); and crime statistics (para. 28).

Future activities for 1995-1996 are proposed for each of the above subjects. Points for discussion by the Statistical Commission are also included (para. 32).

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INTRODUCTION

1. At its twenty-seventh session, the Statistical Commission requested three reports related to demographic and social statistics. 1/ However, based on their proposed outlines, the Working Group on International Statistical Programmes and Coordination, at its sixteenth session, decided to consolidate the three reports into two reports (see E/CN.3/AC.1/1994/2, para. 56). Accordingly, the present report deals with demographic, social and migration statistics; a second report, which is also before the Commission (E/CN.3/1995/18), deals with population and housing censuses. Issues covered in the present report include civil registration and vital statistics (CR/VS), migration statistics, the Demographic Yearbook and its database, family and household statistics, human settlements, the statistics of large cities and crime statistics.

I. CIVIL REGISTRATION AND VITAL STATISTICS SYSTEMS AND METHODS

2. The Statistical Division of the United Nations Secretariat (UNSTAT) has continued its methodological work on the further development of CR/VS methods. It has also continued to provide technical support to countries for strengthening their civil registration and vital statistics systems. Substantial progress has been achieved in the implementation of the International Programme for Accelerating the Improvement of Vital Statistics and Civil Registration Systems.

A. Methodological work

3. In 1993, the Handbook of Vital Statistics Systems and Methods 2/ which had been issued earlier in English, was translated and published in French, Russian and Spanish. In order to assist countries in improving the operation of their CR/VS systems, a report on their management, operation and maintenance has been completed and is expected to be issued in the second quarter of 1995. Two other reports, one on CR/VS computerization and the other on the CR/VS legal framework, are under preparation and are expected to be completed by the fourth quarter of 1995. In addition, a technical report on the review and evaluation of CR/VS projects that are supported by the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) was completed at the request and with the financial support of UNFPA; the report provides a critical review of the technical support services that have been provided to countries and how that support can be further improved.

4. In addition, five country studies on the feasibility for improving CR/VS systems have been completed for Brazil, Ecuador, Guatemala, Mexico and the Philippines. Four of those studies were prepared with financial assistance from the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF). Two of the studies have been issued and the other three are expected to be issued in the near future. The studies were prepared in close consultation with the Governments concerned and they not only examine the issue of CR/VS in each country but also provide

suggestions on how a master plan for the improvement of CR/VS systems could be developed and implemented.

5. A microcomputer database on national CR/VS systems, including the legal framework, procedures for recording and reporting vital events, and definitions of vital events, is being developed by UNSTAT. The information contained in the database will be used to further study CR/VS methods and systems, and to support technical cooperation services being provided to developing countries.

B. International Programme for Accelerating the Improvement of Vital Statistics and Civil Registration Systems

6. As reported to the Statistical Commission at its twenty-sixth session, a series of workshops were planned for different regions of the world under the auspices of the International Programme for Accelerating the Improvement of Vital Statistics and Civil Registration Systems. The first such workshop was held for the Latin American region (Buenos Aires, 1991) and was organized by UNSTAT and hosted by the Government of Argentina. The second workshop was jointly organized by UNSTAT and the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA) (Damascus, 20-24 June 1993) and was hosted by the Government of Syria; 12 member States of ESCWA participated. The third workshop was jointly organized by UNSTAT and the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP) (Beijing, 29 November-3 December 1993) and was hosted by the Government of China; 14 ESCAP countries participated. The fourth workshop was organized by UNSTAT, in collaboration with the Economic Commission for Africa (ECA), for selected English-speaking countries in Africa (Addis Ababa, 5-9 December 1994). As in previous workshops, representatives of countries or areas outside the ECA region and international organizations that are interested in the workshop, including the World Health Organization (WHO), UNICEF and UNFPA, were expected to participate.

7. Through the workshops, the International Programme attempted to

(a) Assess the current status of national civil registration and vital statistics systems, including their coverage, timeliness and reliability in the participating countries;

(b) Outline strategies to increase the efficiency of CR/VS systems during the 1990s and beyond;

(c) Discuss ways and means of raising the awareness of both the population at large and the staff involved in CR/VS activities.

8. In their recommendations, the workshops strongly urged governmental agencies dealing with CR/VS systems to strengthen their coordination and cooperation and to improve the timeliness, completeness and accuracy of the information that they provided. It also recommended the establishment of close links between CR/VS outputs and the end-users of the data and information. Suggestions were made on strengthening cooperation and collaboration with other national registration systems and programmes with common characteristics, such as (a) population registers and citizen registers; (b) electoral registers;

(c) health-care and family-planning programmes, and programmes for infants, children and women of reproductive age etc.; and (d) population identification services.

9. Another major activity of the International Programme is the development of a clearing-house for information on CR/VS systems. UNSTAT has begun to collect and maintain data from countries on methodology; laws and regulations; manuals of registration and statistical processes; and storage and retrieval systems of records and statistics. Those materials will be used to further develop a methodological database on CR/VS, as discussed in paragraph 5 above.

10. TO maintain the momentum developed in the workshops, UNSTAT has also maintained close contact with all participants in the workshops and has kept them informed on progress made in various countries. A first report was distributed in September 1994 to all participants in the workshops, national statistical offices and concerned international organizations; further reports are anticipated as new information becomes available.

C. Future activities

11. In 1995, the manuals mentioned in paragraph 3 above that are currently under preparation will be published. Two additional manuals, one on public and official use for civil registration and vital statistics records and another on population, education and communication for civil registration, are being planned and are expected to be completed in 1996. The CR/VS database will be further developed and clearing-house activities will be continued.

12. Work will be continued on the implementation of the International Programme. A fifth workshop on the subject for francophone countries in Africa has been scheduled for the third quarter of 1995. Similar workshops are also being contemplated for the economies in transition, if resources are available.

II. INTERNATIONAL MIGRATION STATISTICS

13. Pursuant to the request of the Statistical Commission at its twenty-seventh session, UNSTAT has initiated work on the review of the current recommendations on international migration statistics, in cooperation with United Nations regional commissions (Eurostat) and other organizations concerned. The review was necessary because, since the Commission adopted the current recommendations on the subject in 1976, the phenomenon of international migration has changed considerably in terms of its volume, direction and categories, especially in terms of the growing numbers of refugees, asylum-seekers and other migrants.

A. Review of current recommendations on international migration statistics

14. For the purposes of the review process, the Statistical Office of the European Community (Eurostat) initiated a series of important activities and considered them at a meeting of its Working Group on Migration Statistics

(Luxembourg, 13-14 December 1993). Following that meeting, a joint meeting of UNSTAT and Eurostat staff was held (New York, 20-21 January 1994) to (a) identify priority activities in the review process; (b) set up a possible division of work among UNSTAT, Eurostat, the Economic Commission for Europe (ECE) and other concerned bodies, including the other regional commissions, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), the International Labour Organization (ILO) and the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD); and (c) draw up a schedule of consultations and meetings to consider the outputs of various activities and advance the review process.

15. The UNSTAT-Eurostat joint meeting, after considering several United Nations publications that deal with migration statistics and the concerns raised regarding international migration statistics, identified three elements of the current recommendations for critical study: (a) concepts and definitions concerning flow and stock statistics; (b) the definition of immigrant stock/foreign population; and (c) statistics on refugees, asylum-seekers and other special categories of international population movements. The joint meeting decided in the first phase to proceed with the priority activities described below.

16. A special study on international migration flow and stock concepts and definitions based on a migration questionnaire prepared by Eurostat was thoroughly discussed and revised at the joint meeting. The questionnaire, which focuses in detail on current concepts, definitions and data sources, was sent by Eurostat to countries that are members of the European Union (EU) and the European Free Trade Association (EFTA) in the first quarter of 1994. It was designed to carefully review the national data situation, including underlying definitions and problems faced by EU and EFTA countries in implementing United Nations recommendations. The questionnaire was also sent by ECE to all its member countries except those EU and EFTA countries that had already been covered by the Eurostat study so as to ascertain their views on the implementation of the United Nations recommendations.

17. Responses from ECE countries to the migration questionnaire have been received and are currently being analysed by Eurostat. Consultation was held in September 1994 by the staff of UNSTAT and Eurostat with ECE, UNHCR, the ILO, the International Organization for Migration (IOM) and other organizations based in Geneva to obtain their inputs to the review process. An initial report containing the analysis and results of the special study will be presented to the ECE/Eurostat Working Party on Migration Statistics, to be held in November 1994. In the last quarter of 1994, the second phase of work in the review process will be considered. In addition, ways of expanding the review process, including the above-mentioned study to cover countries in ESCAP, ECLAC and ESCWA, will be explored.

18. A joint UNSTAT-Eurostat meeting in January 1994 noted a growing interest in immigrant stock/foreign population statistics. Population censuses are the principal source of stock data in many countries. One key issue is the lack of harmony between concepts relating to stock data and flow statistics. Eurostat, with the assistance of a consultant, is carrying out a study on national practices and definitions on the subject. The experience of OECD in this area,

as well as the data obtained in the 1990 round of population censuses, are also considered valuable contributions to the review process. Further work will be undertaken by UNSTAT to examine issues in the compilation of immigrant stock data in other regions.

19. Eurostat is also carrying out, with the assistance of a consultant, a study of definitions, data sources and availability regarding refugees and asylum-seekers in EU and EFTA countries. The results of both studies will be presented for discussion at the above-mentioned ECE/Eurostat Working Party on Migration Statistics.

B. Future activities

20. In addition to extending the special study to countries of migration origin, UNSTAT and Eurostat will jointly organize an expert group meeting on international migration statistics in July 1995. The expert group will, inter alia, consider the findings of various studies undertaken as part of the review process. The report of the expert group, including possibly draft revised recommendations on international migration statistics, is to be submitted to the Statistical Commission at its twenty-ninth session.

III. DEMOGRAPHIC YEARBOOK AND DATABASES

21. In 1994, two issues of the Demographic Yearbook were published. The Demographic Yearbook - Special Issue: Population Ageing and the Situation of Elderly Persons 3/ commemorated the International Year of the Family and the convening of the International Conference on Population and Development. To prepare the Special Issue, a questionnaire was sent to all national statistical offices requesting that countries provide data of particular relevance to the study of elderly persons, including their living arrangements. A thorough review of the Demographic Yearbook computer data files was also made in order to reconstruct a history of population ageing over the past 40 years. In addition to statistical tables, the Special Issue contains several articles. Two of those articles were prepared in collaboration with WHO and the Population Division of the United Nations Secretariat: "Mortality trends among the elderly", which reviews mortality decline during the past 30 years and describes major causes of death, and "Age structure changes in 1950-1990", which describes how fertility and mortality decline lead to population ageing. Two other articles included in the Special Issue were prepared by UNSTAT: "Disability statistics in studies of ageing", which defines disability and discusses its relationship to population ageing, and "Household and family statistics on ageing", which is described in paragraph 27 below. The Demographic Yearbook 1992 4/ has fertility and mortality statistics as its special topic, showing trends in mortality over the past decade, together with the core annual tables.

22. In 1995, the Demographic Yearbook 1993 will be published, 5/ with population censuses as its special topic. In addition to the 25 core tables, the Demographic Yearbook 1993 will contain 15 tables on demographic and social characteristics drawn from population censuses concluded during the past decade.

In addition, the quarterly series Population and Vital Statistics Report has been issued on a regular basis.

23. The Demographic and Social Statistics Database (DSSD), a microcomputer database developed with the financial support of UNFPA, is now in full operation. The database contains data published since 1948 in the 44 issues of the Demographic Yearbook, as well as selected human settlement statistics. It provides rapid access to demographic and social time-series statistics, beginning with data from 1950. It also permits users to choose one of 30 topics by time period, by country or area, or by data source. As the development of DSSD continues, additional topics will be added and data files will be updated annually. It is anticipated that some files that are currently included only infrequently in the Yearbook, as well as other subjects such as statistics of cities, crime statistics and other social statistics, could also eventually be disseminated through DSSD, resources permitting.

24. Another project completed during 1993-1994 was the development of computer software to facilitate the reply to Demographic Yearbook questionnaires using microcomputers. In an experiment currently under way for the 1994 issue of the Demographic Yearbook questionnaires, 16 countries received a diskette with a request to provide population estimates, vital statistics and international migration statistics for the annual Demographic Yearbook series. It is hoped that the project will reduce the burden on national statistical offices reporting demographic statistics.

25. In 1996-1997, the 46th and 47th editions of the Demographic Yearbook will be published. In addition to the annual core tables, it is planned to devote the special topic to economic characteristics of the population in the 46th edition, and to household and family statistics in the 47th edition. The quarterly Population and Vital Statistics Report series will continue to be issued. DSSD will be maintained and, resources permitting, further developed.

26. Additional work on population ageing was undertaken in collaboration with the International Leadership Center on Longevity and Society, Mount Sinai School of Medicine, New York. With their financial support, UNSTAT provided advice on the choice of indicators and prepared tabulations for an almanac on ageing and social development to increased longevity. A database containing relevant statistics and indicators on population ageing for selected countries is under preparation and is expected to be completed in the third quarter of 1995.

IV. SOCIAL STATISTICS

A. Family and household statistics

27. UNSTAT has continued to further the development of methods in collecting family and household statistics by undertaking an extensive review of country practices on the collection and tabulation of family and household statistics, which will be discussed at the meeting of an expert group on population and housing censuses to be held in 1995. The questionnaire for the Demographic Yearbook - Special Issue: Population Ageing and the Situation of Elderly Persons, which was sent to countries in late 1992, contained four tables on

family/household composition and the living arrangements of the elderly. In the Special Issue, there are six tables devoted exclusively to households, household population, living arrangements for persons 60 years old and over, population in collective living quarters and homeless population etc. A special article entitled "Household and family statistics on ageing", which examines the basic concepts of family and household, classifications of households, and families and living arrangements of the elderly, was published in the Special Issue.

28. As part of the contribution of UNSTAT to the International Year of the Family, it completed an ad hoc project to prepare the Statistical Chart on World Families, 6/ with the financial assistance of the International Year of the Family secretariat. The Chart, which was published in all six official languages of the United Nations, provides users with family indicators on the number and size of families, family composition and the living conditions of families, together with statistical definitions.

B. Human settlements statistics and city statistics

29. In 1993, Housing in the World: Graphical Presentation of Statistical Data 7/ was prepared by UNSTAT to present statistical data on housing from the 1980 and 1990 rounds of housing censuses. The questionnaire on human settlements statistics that was sent out by UNSTAT in March 1992 was answered by 103 countries or areas by September 1994. Reported data were compiled and a database on housing and human settlements statistics (DATAHOUSE), has been developed. The construction of DATAHOUSE was closely coordinated with the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat), which also provided financial support for data processing. UNSTAT and Habitat are to jointly prepare a Compendium of Human Settlements Statistics for presentation at the Second United Nations Conference on Human Settlements (Habitat II) (to be held in Istanbul, 3-14 June 1996).

30. UNSTAT collaborated further with Habitat in improving the collection of urban statistics. UNSTAT participated in the International Expert Group Meeting on Urban Indicators convened by Habitat (Nairobi, January 1994). The Meeting reviewed the suggested urban indicators that may be used for Habitat II and for international comparison purposes; recommendations were made for submission to the Preparatory Committee for Habitat II.

31. UNSTAT also participated in the Large Cities Statistics Project, a project initiated by the Network of Urban Researches of the European Union (NUREC) of Duisburg, Germany, and co-sponsored by the International Statistical Institute (ISI), International Union of Local Authorities (IULA), Habitat and UNSTAT. The project aims to collect and disseminate a comprehensive set of statistical data on large cities. A questionnaire was developed and sent to the mayors of all cities with a population of 100,000 and above. UNSTAT provided technical advice on the development of the questionnaire, the selection of indicators, and methods and procedures of data collection; it also requested national statistical offices to assist the mayors of their countries in completing the project. UNSTAT will continue to provide technical support throughout the remaining phase of the project; collected data are expected to become available to users in late 1995

C. Crime statistics

32. UNSTAT coordinated closely with the Criminal Justice and Crime Prevention Branch of the United Nations Office at Vienna in the administration of the Fourth United Nations Survey of Crime Trends and Criminal Justice Systems, assisting in the design, dispatch and collection of questionnaires. The Survey was a quinquennial exercise until 1994, when the Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice decided to make it a biennial exercise. UNSTAT will continue to provide support to further data collection for the Fourth Survey and will continue to administer the data-collection process for the Fifth Survey, subject to the availability of resources. All the questionnaires returned to UNSTAT have been forwarded to the United Nations Office at Vienna for compilation and tabulation.

D. Future activities

33. UNSTAT plans to publish the Compendium of Human Settlement Statistics 8/ in collaboration with Habitat in the third quarter of 1995, when the development of DATAHOUSE will be complete and the database will be disseminated to users. UNSTAT will continue to provide advice to the Large Cities Statistics Project on its publication and dissemination; it also expects to provide further technical support to the Crime Justice and Crime Prevention Branch of the United Nations Office at Vienna in the processing, compilation and publication of the Fourth United Nations Crime Survey (see para. 32 above).

34. The Social Statistics Programme of UNSTAT will participate in the organization of an expert group meeting scheduled for 1995 on the 2000 World Programme of Population and Housing Censuses. UNSTAT will present proposals for revising the United Nations recommendations on housing censuses, taking into consideration developments arising from the 1980 and 1990 census rounds.

V. POINTS FOR DISCUSSION

35. The Commission may wish to:

(a) Advise on methodological work and comment on progress in the implementation of the International Programme for Accelerating the Improvement of Civil Registration and Vital Statistics Systems, and endorse the proposal for additional workshops for the economies in transition;

(b) Consider activities in progress for the review/revision of the current recommendations on international migration statistics and suggest additional activities deemed necessary in the second phase covering countries of migration origin;

(c) Review and comment on the work under way in the field of social and related statistics in the light of emerging national requirements for social development and policy.

Notes

1/ Official Records of the Economic and Social Council, 1993, Supplement No. 6 (E/1993/26), para. 2.

2/ United Nations publication, Sales No. E.91.XVII.5.

3/ United Nations publication, Sales No. E.92.XIII.9.

4/ United Nations publication, Sales No. E/F.94.XIII.1.

5/ United Nations publication, forthcoming.

6/ Statistical Papers, Series Y, No. 7 (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.93.XVII.9).

7/ Statistical Papers, Series F, No. 63 (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.93.XVII.10).

8/ United Nations publication, forthcoming.

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DEMOGRAPHIC AND SOCIAL STATISTICS

Report on demographic, social and migration statistics

Report of the Secretary-General

SUMMARY

The addendum contains further information on gender statistics and on impairment, disability and handicap statistics, including the recommendations of the United Nations Expert Group Meeting on the Development of Impairment, Disability and Handicap Statistics (Voorburg, the Netherlands, 7-11 November 1994) (annex).

Points for discussion are included at the end of each chapter (paras. 6 and 17).

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I. GENDER STATISTICS

1. The primary objectives of the gender statistics programme of the Statistical Division of the United Nations Secretariat (UNSTAT) are to effect the long-term improvements in statistical concepts, methods and data collection that are needed to provide unbiased quantitative monitoring and analysis of the situation of women and of equality and equal opportunity between men and women. In 1994-1995, the main specific activities and objectives of the programme are:

(a) The publication of the second edition of The World's Women: Trends and Statistics as a main official background document for the Fourth World Conference on Women (to be held in Beijing, 4-15 September 1995). The publication is being prepared with funding from the Department for Public Information and the Division for Advancement of Women of the United Nations Secretariat, the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM), the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), the World Food Programme (WFP), the International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women (INSTRAW), and the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO);

(b) The dissemination and promotion of the second edition of The World's Women as a United Nations publication with a very substantial global audience and proven sales potential. As of November 1994, about 22,000 copies of the first edition 1/ had been sold in all languages and about 4,000 complementary copies had been distributed to official Government users;

(c) The dissemination and promotion of the newly updated Women's Indicators and Statistics Database (Wistat) on CD-ROM and diskettes and on public-access on-line networks. The development of Wistat has been supported by UNFPA; it is now widely used and recognized as by far the most comprehensive and authoritative international data source available for gender statistics, research and analysis at the national, regional and international levels;

(d) The publication of a technical guide for the preparation of national gender statistics reports, and the provision of technical support to national and subregional training programmes in the field by assisting in training workshops for the development of national gender statistics publications and programmes, as well as collaborating with other agencies and institutions in the development of their training materials;

(e) The provision of statistical information for the Fourth World Conference on Women in its consideration of gender statistics issues in the draft platform for action, including participating in developing the draft platform by working with the Division for the Advancement of Women, working with drafting groups at meetings of the Preparatory Committee for the Conference and working with expert group meetings, as well as working with non-governmental organizations and national representatives on an ad hoc basis. The issues to be addressed include how to make further improvements in statistical concepts and methods; national, regional and international data collection, dissemination and analysis programmes; the measurement and valuation of unpaid work; the

development of satellite accounts to national accounts on women's economic contribution; 2/ measurement and data collection in the area of women's economic contribution to the informal sector; and the measurement and monitoring of women's rights;

(f) The coordination of gender statistics in the global statistical system by developing coordinated and integrated statistical outputs to avoid duplicate and inconsistent data-collection and compilation activities, working with a wide range of users in order to make those procedures and data available in formats that are easy to use and widely available.

2. Extensive research, data compilation and preliminary analysis for the preparation of the second edition of The World's Women: Trends and Statistics were largely completed in mid-1994. Findings were reviewed with the sponsoring agencies in the second half of 1994 and final publication in all languages is scheduled for mid-1995. The new edition will contain chapters on population, families and households; population and environment; health; education science and media; and work and power. Its presentation and analysis have been carefully reviewed to take into account the conclusions and recommendations of the International Conference on Population and Development (see A/CONF.171/13 and Add.1). The second edition will highlight new and innovative statistics on such subjects as women and national accounting, women in science and the media, and women in positions of power.

3. The second comprehensive update of the Women's Indicators and Statistics Database (Wistat), supported by UNFPA, was completed in August 1994 in close cooperation with the regional commissions. Wistat is the main data source for The World's Women and is being issued on diskettes and CD-ROM for independent research and analysis at the national, regional and international levels.

4. The manual in preparation by UNSTAT for national use on how to compile and organize statistics on gender issues and how to present tables and charts and write up quantitative analysis will be completed and issued in draft form in fall 1994; it will be published in final form in 1995. Work on the manual is supported by the Joint Consultative Group on Policy (JCGP), a coordinating body comprising UNICEF, UNDP, UNIFEM, UNFPA, WFP and the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD). The project is being undertaken with JCGP in gender statistics in response to the impact of The World's Women and the need expressed by many countries for help in producing similar national gender statistics reports, in particular in the light of the Fourth World Conference on Women.

5. Three workshops on gender statistics using materials prepared for the manual have been held (Botswana, August 1993, sponsored by Swedish International Development Agency (SIDA); Morocco, 13-17 December 1993, sponsored by INSTRAW; and Thailand, January 1994, sponsored by SIDA and UNIFEM). The same project is also supporting initiatives to develop publications similar to The World's Women for two countries at the national level as well as for the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA) region as a whole. In addition, UNSTAT is assisting several countries in developing gender statistics reports in connection with ongoing statistical projects, for example in Kenya and Bangladesh.

6. The Statistical Commission may wish to:

(a) Take note of the progress made in the preparation of statistical documentation for the Fourth World Conference on Women, including the preparation of the second edition of The World's Women: Trends and Statistics;

(b) Comment on the feasibility and desirability of adapting the collaborative and analytical approach that was adopted in the preparation of The World's Women to other national and international statistical publications in various social fields;

(c) Comment on the desirability and use of a classification of activities for use in time-use statistics, in particular for measuring the contributions of women and men to the economy and to work. The Commission may also wish to consider the UNSTAT proposal to prepare a draft trial classification in the field as a basis for further research and special studies.

II. IMPAIRMENT, DISABILITY AND HANDICAP STATISTICS

7. UNSTAT work on the development of impairment, disability, and handicap (IDH) statistics has progressed in two major areas:

(a) The design of statistical methodology and standards for data collection and the development of global indicators;

(b) The production of statistics and indicators of disability.

8. As to the former, UNSTAT convened the United Nations Expert Group Meeting on the Development of Impairment, Disability and Handicap Statistics (Voorburg, the Netherlands, 7-11 November 1994), which was hosted by the Central Bureau of Statistics of the Netherlands; the purpose of the Meeting was to (a) review existing disability data-collection methods and standards, and (b) prepare, based on the outcome of that review, a guiding set of principles for use in censuses, surveys and registration systems. At that Meeting, the Expert Group reviewed a draft of the proposed handbook on census and survey methods for the development of IDH statistics. The Expert Group acknowledged the increase in the demand for national and international IDH statistics that had resulted from the growing commitment of Governments around the world to the rights, welfare and health of persons who experience IDH. The Expert Group felt that, since government policies and programmes on IDH were currently proliferating, there was an even greater need for the leadership and guidance of UNSTAT in the context of increased attention to social statistics. Because IDH statistics was a newly emerging area of statistical development, the Expert Group requested that its recommendations, which are contained in the annex to the present report, be submitted to the Statistical Commission for review at its next session.

9. The Expert Group paid special attention to the use by countries of the International Classification of Impairments, Disabilities and Handicaps (ICIDH) of the World Health Organization (WHO) as well as the WHO revision process. For that reason, the Expert Group Meeting had been planned to precede WHO's Second

International Meeting on the Revision of the International Classification of Impairments, Disabilities and Handicaps (Voorburg, the Netherlands, 14-18 November 1994).

10. In anticipation of the Expert Group Meeting, UNSTAT and the North America Collaborating Centre of the United States National Center for Health Statistics had jointly organized an international meeting on the theme "Scientific review of applications: International Classification of Impairments, Disabilities and Handicaps (St. Michaels, United States of America, 31 May-3 June 1994). The purpose of that meeting was to discuss the proposed handbook on census and survey methods for the development of IDH statistics before its review by the Expert Group.

11. A set of global indicators were proposed in the 1993 framework for the Third Monitoring of Progress towards Health for All (HFA) to be carried out at the national level by all Member States, including a disability-related indicator jointly developed by WHO and UNSTAT: "The number of people identified as having one of the following types of disabilities: difficulty seeing, difficulty hearing, difficulty speaking, difficulty moving, difficulty learning/ comprehending/remembering, or other (please specify)" (see WHO/HST/GSP/93.3). A similar indicator has been developed by UNICEF and WHO in collaboration with UNSTAT for use in the assessment of progress towards the aims of the World Summit for Children; it is contained in a UNICEF/WHO document entitled "Joint WHO/UNICEF recommended indicators for monitoring health goals of the World Summit for Children" (see CS/PROG/IL/93-072, recommendation No. 8), and is recommended by WHO and UNICEF for National Monitoring and programme management and international reporting.

12. As to the actual production of statistics and indicators, dissemination and use of the United Nations Disability Statistics Database (DISTAT) has continued. In 1994, consultants to UNSTAT prepared a report entitled "A human development agenda for disability: statistical considerations", which suggests possible approaches to including IDH in the monitoring of human development outcomes; the report was based on DISTAT and its preparation was supported by the Swedish Organization of Handicapped International Aid Foundation (SHIA).

13. A special article entitled "Disability statistics in studies of ageing" was published in the Demographic Yearbook-Special Issue: Population Ageing and the Situation of Elderly Persons; 3/ the article presents age and sex-specific disability data for 57 countries and discusses their implications for policy formulation and programme planning, and its preparation was supported by UNFPA.

14. As a contribution to the International Year of the Family, statistics on the disabled for 87 countries were published in the Statistical Chart on World Families, 4/ supported by the Trust Fund for the International Year of the Family.

15. A report has been prepared by UNSTAT and WHO for the Fifth Economic Commission for Europe (ECE)/WHO Joint Meeting on Health Statistics, Conference of European Statisticians, entitled "The ICIDH and the development of disability statistics" (CES/AC.36/51) (EURO/ICP/HST/157/51). In addition, the report of the International Workshop on the Development and Dissemination of Statistics on

Persons with Disabilities is now available in English and French; 5/ the report summarizes the conclusions of a meeting organized by Statistics Canada and UNSTAT (Ottawa, 13-16 October 1992).

16. UNSTAT has prepared, in collaboration with WHO, a draft statistical training manual for the development of disability statistics, prepared especially for the use of managers and programme planners in the production of national disability statistics through surveys, censuses and registration systems; the manual is to be published by the United Nations in 1994, with the support of SIDA.

17. The Commission may wish to assign priorities to the recommendations of the Expert Group and to indicate the role of UNSTAT in implementing them.

Notes

1/ The World's Women: Trends and Statistics, Statistical Papers, Series K, No. 8 (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.90.XVII.3.

2/ See Report of the World Conference to Review and Appraise the Achievements of the United Nations Decade for Women: Equality, Development and Peace, (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.85.IV.10), chap. IA, para. 120, and Official Records of the Economic and Social Council, 1989, Supplement No. 3 (E/1989/21), para. 141.

3/ United Nations publication, Sales No. E.92.XIII.9.

4/ Statistical Papers, Series Y, No. 7 (United Nations publication, Sales No. E/93.XVII.9).

5/ Issued by Statistics Canada (Ottawa, 1993).

Annex

RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE UNITED NATIONS EXPERT GROUP MEETING ON THE DEVELOPMENT OF IMPAIRMENT, DISABILITY AND HANDICAP STATISTICS

(Voorburg, the Netherlands, 7-11 November 1994)

A. General recommendations

1. In the light of the World Programme of Action concerning Disabled Persons, which was adopted by the General Assembly in its resolution 37/52 of 3 December 1982, and of the Standard Rules on the Equalization of Opportunities for Persons with Disabilities, which were adopted by the General Assembly in its resolution 48/96 of 20 December 1993, it is increasingly recognized that statistics on impairment, disability and handicap (IDH) should support policy-related issues. IDH data often have multiple purposes: national surveillance; the monitoring of opportunities for work; education; health care; independent living; the assessment of social security systems; the determination of disability benefits; the establishment of priorities for prevention programmes for primary health care; maternal and child health; and accident prevention. All those areas require IDH statistics.

2. The United Nations Expert Group Meeting on the Development of Impairment, Disability and Handicap Statistics recommends that a set of standard instruments for the survey measurement of IDH be established by 2001, five years after the publication of the handbook on census and survey methods for the development of IDH statistics that has been reviewed by the Expert Group. In order to achieve that goal, there should be a continuous procedure that provides for the formulation of new common instruments, the testing and evaluation of such new instruments, and agreement on and revision of standards. The process of achieving common standards should be effected in three stages: (a) the formulation of the recommended instruments for promotion and testing in interested countries; (b) the testing of those instruments and evaluation of experience in their use; and (c) the formulation of standard instruments on that basis. Criteria for testing and evaluation should be established, including testing in a minimum number of countries in different continents by means of representative surveys and based on agreement regarding the usefulness of results for policy and planning. In designing common standards, the Expert Group recommends that, as far as possible, a minimum set of measures be established for every standard instrument. The Expert Group also recommends that a minimum set of IDH tabulation items and core data tables be prepared by UNSTAT, and that those items be disseminated for review, further discussion and, ultimately, for recommended use among countries for developing and disseminating IDH statistics.

3. The Expert Group agrees that it is vitally important for all countries to collect information on the IDH status of their populations. Countries that have never surveyed their populations with respect to IDH or have not done so recently should consider including IDH questions in their next census round or initiating an IDH survey. The frequency of data collection using surveys can range from ad hoc or one-time efforts to continuing efforts (always in the

field), depending on how often data are needed for basic population and demographic information, the planning of services, and general health and social policy.

4. The census questionnaire used for complete coverage of the population should not be overloaded with detailed specialized questions on impairments, disabilities, handicaps or any other topic. The Expert Group recommends that, if the objective of including IDH items in a census is to estimate prevalence rates of IDH, a comprehensive short list of IDH items should be used, and work should be initiated to develop such comprehensive short lists and to carry out validity studies of the proposed lists. The lists should be applicable to children (perhaps above a threshold age), the working-age population and the elderly. A broad IDH question may be included in censuses in order to identify the potential for a more detailed follow-up survey. Such broad and non-specific screening questions should be designed to have a high degree of sensitivity but may have low specificity and should not be used to estimate IDH prevalence; the follow-up survey can contain a detailed set of questions to identify the various types of IDH. The question used in some censuses for including IDH as a reason for being economically inactive is not useful for estimating prevalence rates for the total population.

5. Countries that have collected data on IDH should be encouraged to process and disseminate their results. National statistical workshops and seminars should be used to increase the awareness of Government offices and policy makers concerning the usefulness of IDH statistics for policy formulation, programme planning and implementation.

6. In survey planning, the development of questionnaires and the consideration of ethical issues and language and fielding strategies, as well as in planning public relations and education campaigns about survey goals, it is essential to consult organizations of people with disabilities and other interested organizations that deal with the issue of IDH. Persons with disabilities, the organizations that represent them and proxy informants, such as family members and care providers, should be asked to describe their experiences with IDH so that those experiences may be taken into consideration in the planning of survey questions.

B. The International Classification of Impairments, Disabilities, and Handicaps

7. In order to develop a common framework, those undertaking censuses and surveys are encouraged to utilize the WHO International Classification of Impairments, Disabilities and Handicaps (ICIDH) as a standard reference; they are also encouraged to use the concepts contained in the World Programme of Action concerning Disabled Persons, specifically those relating to the goals of prevention, rehabilitation and equal opportunity. The common framework represented by the combined use of ICIDH and the World Programme of Action provides a conceptual link between policies for reducing impairments, disabilities and handicaps and the three major goals of prevention, rehabilitation and equalization of opportunity, thus permitting a broad spectrum of IDH-specific policy and research topics to be addressed.

8. There is a parallel and dependent relationship between the international decisions reached on the development of statistical guidelines for the study of impairments, disabilities and handicaps (referred to hereinafter as IDH statistics), on the one hand, and the further development and use of ICIDH on the other. The Expert Group notes with satisfaction the collaboration and coordination undertaken by UNSTAT and WHO, which has encouraged agreement among census and survey planners and the groups working on the ICIDH revision; the Expert Group recommends that that coordination continue. Any conclusions and recommendations concerning ICIDH concepts and classifications will be subject to the changes and general agreements made during the ICIDH revision process.

9. The Expert Group also recommends the development of guidelines for the measurement of severity; short-lists for use in coding and presenting national census and survey data on IDH; and a general agreement on the development and use of simple, comparable and reliable indicators and survey instruments of IDH for national and international monitoring.

10. No agreement has been reached on a general term to describe either the field of IDH statistics or the population of persons who have been screened into surveys either because they have an impairment or disability or because they experience some form of handicap. The Expert Group recommends that that question revert to the WHO/ICIDH revision process, which should decide on a general term for the IDH field of statistics. Until such a decision is made, terms employed should remain specific to particular impairments, disabilities and handicaps.

C. Data-collection methods: making use of national surveys

11. As a cost-effective way of developing social and health statistics on IDH, ongoing or planned demographic, household and health surveys should include impairment, disability, or handicap instruments at regular intervals.

12. Panel surveys also offer a valuable opportunity to obtain information on transition rates between IDH states, in particular the incidence of disability and the rate of recovery from disability. Such information is important for studying the dynamics of IDH in a population (eg., using multi-state life-table techniques) and for the planning of services. The time interval between survey rounds should be larger than the minimum duration of IDH but as short as possible; one or two years would be optimal.

13. In the context of increasing activities at the international and supranational levels on public health issues, countries should move towards cooperation on surveys on IDH that are already in the planning stages.

D. Testing the validity and reliability of results

14. Substantial research on the evaluation of findings, including studies on the validity and reliability of results, has been carried out by national statistical offices and other bodies. The Expert Group requests UNSTAT to explore possible mechanisms for facilitating the wider dissemination of those

reports; it also recommends that UNSTAT prepare a concise report to consolidate the findings of such evaluation studies and that that report be made available to statistical offices and other interested organizations.

15. The Expert Group also recommends that further research be conducted to examine whether the activities of daily living/instrumental activities of daily living (ADL/IADL) instruments, such as those used by the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), provide measures related more to disabilities or more to handicaps; the question has implications for the classification of ADL/IADL-free life expectancy and for international comparisons of health expectancies derived from ADL/IADL measures.

E. Technical aids/assistive devices

16. The Expert Group requests that increased attention be given by countries to the collection and presentation of data on special auxiliary devices for the reduction of disabilities and handicaps, and that countries use the newly devised Technical Aids for Disabled Persons Classification (ISO 9999). The standardization of technical aids in surveys should be set at a level of generalization that allows countries to specify technology in a way appropriate to its availability, at a minimum of the chapter levels of the International Standards Organization (ISO) standards. Tabulations should be provided showing the use of such devices by specific IDH groups, age and sex. Emphasis should also be placed on the production of standardized tables showing the need for those devices, and on technical products that are generally available and useful in the reduction of disabilities and/or handicaps included in ISO 9999. After 1995, the revised version of ISO 9999 will be available from ISO in Geneva in English, French, German, the Nordic Languages and Dutch.

F. Cause of impairment or disability

17. The Expert Group welcomes the WHO initiatives to establish short lists of causes and underlying conditions for IDH for the use of standard instruments in censuses and surveys, which were provided by WHO in an information note (ESA/STAT/CA.47/INF.6). Those lists and the underlying conditions provided by WHO should be further elaborated by WHO and UNSTAT in consultation with relevant experts and organizations, with particular emphasis on the measurement of co-morbidity. Such lists are particularly useful for providing a common understanding of programme planning in the area of prevention, for IDH surveillance and for linking disease monitoring with IDH issues.

18. In their definition of IDH states, questionnaire instruments should specify a minimum duration that an IDH has lasted or is expected to last. Unless there are specific reasons for choosing another threshold, it is recommended that the minimum duration or expected duration of six months be used; this period is long enough to exclude periods of short-term disability due to acute illness or external cause but short enough to include all disability episodes that last a considerable amount of time. An IDH question should thus include the qualification that the IDH has lasted or is expected to last for six months. Some questionnaire modules specify a minimum duration for the underlying health

condition rather than the IDH state. The Expert Group recommends that, where possible, the minimum duration should relate to the IDH state in order to achieve the maximum comparability of resulting statistics.

G. Data dissemination

19. Statistical offices are encouraged to provide micro-data files on IDH for use by others, protected against identification and according to national regulations. Special requests for additional ad hoc tabulations should be responded to rapidly and at low cost. A capacity to provide such services should be maintained even long after a survey has been conducted. There is a need for UNSTAT or another research organization to take responsibility for storing public-use micro-data files for international comparative analyses, while giving appropriate consideration to licensing restrictions.

20. IDH statistical reports and publications should be provided for people with IDH in accessible formats, such as large-type; Braille; audio formats, including audiovisual cassettes; ASCII computer disks; and special computer programmes and interfaces for people with intellectual impairments.

21. Questionnaires in their original language should be included in survey reports, with an explanation showing how the variables used to describe IDH are derived from survey questions; a correspondence table showing how variables relate to ICIDH should also be included.

22. Standardized descriptions of IDH data-collection procedures should continue to be produced in DISTAT. Consideration should be given, on a trial basis, to providing statistical offices with standard forms for preparing descriptions of their survey work, for inclusion in DISTAT. Standard forms should request details on definitions and concepts used, research designs, reasons for conducting the survey and so on.

23. The Expert Group recognizes the importance of the recent development of population-based indicators on the prevalence of broad groups of disabilities disaggregated by age-group and by sex, as recommended for use in WHO Health For All monitoring and in the UNICEF/WHO monitoring of health goals of the World Summit for Children. The statistical divisions of the regional commissions and the regional offices of WHO are asked to assist countries in developing and applying such indicators as a baseline source of information on IDH.

24. The international community and Governments are giving significant and increased attention to the development of global IDH indicators, the use of which requires coordination and monitoring by the United Nations system. All indicators should be presented as value-free as possible and their wording should be carefully considered to avoid erroneously implying that people who experience IDH are in any way inferior.

25. Disability-free life expectancy (DFLE) and IDH life expectancy estimates should be implemented as core indicators in health statistics. The sources of age-specific impairment, disability, and handicap rates used in the calculation

of DFLE and IDH life expectancy should be clearly explained using ICIDH terminology.

H. Future work

26. The Group of Experts strongly recommends that UNSTAT continue its work on IDH statistics, including its work on DISTAT and the development of international standards and its work in furthering international comparison studies and research. Because Governments around the world have demonstrated a growing commitment to the rights, welfare and health of persons with IDH, there is a growing demand for national and international disability statistics. With commendable foresight, UNSTAT has anticipated that demand by initiating DISTAT and beginning to develop standards for national and international IDH statistics. UNSTAT has provided leadership and guidance to facilitate the development of national IDH statistics. Since national government policies and programmes on IDH are currently proliferating, there is an even greater need for the leadership and guidance of UNSTAT in the context of increased attention to social statistics.

27. In recognition of that need, the Group of Experts agrees that its individual members will inform their respective Governments of UNSTAT contributions to national and international IDH statistics, and will recommend that their Governments support the continuation of the IDH activities of UNSTAT. In particular, the Group of Experts recommends that UNSTAT continue to dedicate a core staff of professionals and support staff to its IDH activities.

28. The Expert Group requests that the preceding recommendations be submitted to the Statistical Commission at its next session. The Expert Group also recommends that the draft handbook on census and survey methods for the development of IDH statistics that was reviewed by the Expert Group be submitted for publication by the United Nations in all its official languages in 1995, taking into consideration the revisions made by the Expert Group, for use by statistical offices and research organizations as principles and guidelines for IDH statistical work in the holding of censuses and household surveys and the compilation of administrative registries.